VOLUNTEERS IN TECHNICAL ASSISTANCE (VITA)

AREA DEVELOPMENT SCHEME

SELECTED DISTRICT PROFILES

INTRODUCTION

In mid-1988 VITA introduced the Area Development Scheme approach to their component (Rural Works) of the Agricultural Sector Support Program. Criteria for ADSs included in place field staff, limited area (usually a district of a province), the need for more than one kind of assistance, and a local shura (council) through which the field staff can work. Geographic parameters included choosing (within the constraints of the war) areas that provided a representative sample of ecosystems so that the initial ADSs could function as pilot testing projects. There currently are eleven functioning ADSs:

Province	District
Kandahar	Maroof Panjwai
Ghazni	Markaz (center) Andar
Logar	Charkh Baraki Barak
Wardak	Chak
Paktika	Wazakhwa
Parwan	Chard-i-Ghorbund
Baghlan	Dahana-e-Ghori
Takhar	Farkhar



Plans have been made to begin ADSs in ?

The objective of the Rural Works component of the Agricultural Rehabilitation Sector Support Program is to assist in rebuilding the much damaged agricultural base in Afghanistan. Preliminary assessments of needs in the ADS areas indicated that irrigation systems required the most immediate attention. Irrigation systems in these areas (as well as in many other parts

of Afghanistan) have been incapacitated by or operate with reduced capacity because of both direct and indirect effects of the war, e. g., bombing and mining, lack of personnel and equipment to ensure maintenance.

Some other forms of agricultural rehabilitation assistance also have been provided in the ADSs, e. g., inputs such as fertilizers and farm power sources such as tractors and oxen. Planning for areal, as well as project focus, enlargement will require a more systematic analysis of current conditions and needs. It was decided, therefore, to being preparation of a series of ADS profiles which will detail current agricultural and related factors in selected ADSs.

Five profile pilot areas were chosen - Baraki Barak and Charkh in Logar province, Chak district in Wardak province, Markaz (center) and Andar districts in Ghazni province. The potential for relative ease of communications and availability of data provided the criteria for the choise of these ADSs as pilot areas. In addition, there are agricultural projects being implemented by other agencies in several of these districts providing the potential for supplemental data from other sources as well as the opportunity to corroborate data provided by VITA personnel.

It became obvious fairly soon after inception of the profile work that "relative ease of communication" was indeed relative. The profile team encountered a wide variety of problems, the main obstacle being a quite serious deficiency of reliable and pertinent data on current conditions coupled with a lack of good baseline data with which to compare recently collected information. None the less, we believe it is important to begin assembling and mapping available data lest what exists be lost and in order to determine methods for improvement of data collection. For the long term, training of Afghans in data collection and accurate geographic observation techniques will be an invaluable contribution both to project design as well as to the overall future of reconstruction in Afghanistan.

These profiles are presented in both report and map form. The written reports address the following issues:

(1) Geographic location - actual and relative

(2) Physical Characteristics of the area - topography, geology, climate, soils, natural vegetation

(3) Population - number estimates, depopulation, ethnic configuration

(4) War damage and current level of war activity

(5) Transportation and communications

(6) Political Structures

(7) Agriculture - land ownership, labor availability, farm power, irrigation systems, agricultural inputs, forests, mills, grain storage

(8) Markets - availability of items and prices

(9) Storage Facilities

(10) Mills

(11) NGO activities in the area

Each district profile is accompanied by a set of maps illustrating the following categories of data:

(1) a base map depicting administrative boundaries and topographic features. These maps were prepared from a base map at a scale of 1:100,000. They were enlarged to a scale of 1:50,000.

(2) a set of overlays depicting baseline data in the following categories: geology,

These data were taken from the National Atlas of the Democratic Republic of Afghanistan, Geokart, Poland, 1984; A Geography of Afghanistan, Center for Afghanistan Studies, University of Nebraska at Omaha, 1976; A Gazeteer of Afghanistan, Central Statistics Office, Prime Ministry, Kabul; as well as a variety of other written and mapped information.

Initially, a series of overlays depicting recent data collected by VITA and other NGO field officers was envisaged. The data provided by these sources, to date, is not sufficiently adequate or reliable to warrant mapping.

PROFILE 1: BARAKI BARAK (LOGAR PROVINCE)

I. Introduction

The two districts of Baraki Barak and Charkh in Logar province were chosen to serve as pilot profiles for several reasons. First, they are relatively easy to reach from Pakistan. Second, there are several other NGOs working on various reconstruction and health projects which can serve as supplementary souces of data. Third, the VITA field officers in these districts are very experienced persons. Fourth, the education level in Logar is comparatively higher than in many other areas of Afghanistan, a factor which should make data collection easier. Fifth, the security situation is good in this area.

II. Location and Dimensions

The district of Baraki Barak represents the southwestern sector of the province of Logar. The absolute location of the district ranges from [approximately] 33o8'N to 34oN and 68o7'E to 69oE. The center of the district is located at 33o56'N and 68o55'E. In terms of relative location, it is bordered on the northwest by Wardak province, on the southwest by Ghazni province, on the southeast by Charkh district (Logar), on the northeast by Pul-i-Alam district (Logar), and on the north northwest by Mohammed Agha district (Logar). The northern boundary of Baraki Barak is approximately 50 kms from the city of Kabul. The district capital, also called Baraki Barak, is 10 kms from Pul-i-Alam, the provincial capital, and 22 kms from the VITA ARS headquarters in the town of Charkh (Charkh district).

The total area encompassed in the district of Baraki Barak is 329 kms. It is approximately 25 kms from west to east at its widest point and approximately 40 kms from north to south at its widest point. In terms of comparable sizes of districts, Baraki Barak is a relatively small district common to the densely inhabited central eastern provinces of Afghanistan. District administrative units in minimal density areas (e. g., the west,

southwest, and far northeast) are much larger.

III. Topography and Geology

The average elevation of Baraki Barak is approximately 1,935 meters. DESCRIBE LAND

The minerological/petrological profile of Baraki Barak varies considerably by location as well as elevation. For example, in the north (elevation?) one finds pebbles, conglomerates, sandstones, siltstones, clays, marls, salt, and gypsum of Quaternary (Neogene) origin DATES? The northwest and southwest are composed primarily of volcanic rocks of Cenozoic origin (DATES?), while the far and central northwest are made up of igneous rocks of differing ages. In the central and astern parts of the district, Mesozoic (DATES?) limestones, sandstones, slates, conglomerates, and dolomites represent the major rock types. The southeast is composed of gneisses, magmatites, quartzites, schists, marbles, and related ____________. Although there is chromite in the nearby districts of Mohammed Agha and Kulangar, there appear to be no large quantities of exploitable minerals in Baraki Barak.

WHAT IS SIGNIF TO AGRI - SOILS, ETC

Baraki Barak is located in a major fault zone, between two major fault lines - the Sarobi and the Muqur. In addition, there are several smaller fault lines in the area. Most of the district falls into the "moderate damage probable" zone, although some of the peripheral areas are in the "major damage probable" zone.

IV. Climate

SEE MAPS. Data from the early 1970s indicates that average annual rainfall in Logar province was 227 millimeters. Baraki Barak district averages between 300 - 400 millimeters of precipitation annually. These average precipitation figures fall into a lower third of a nationwide range that goes from a low of 30 millimteres in the southwest to a high over 1,000 millimeters in the Salang region in the mountains north of Kabul.
Several climate classifications for the district are available. It is considered a sub-humid cold steppe in one classification and a cold semi-desert (less than six months freeze) in another.

RELATE TO AGRICULTURE

V. Soils and Natural Vegetation

SEE MAPS

VI. Population:

Pre-war statistics provided by the Ministry of Agriculture and Irrigation, using data from 1973, indicated a total district population of 60,875 or 39,068, the latter figure being from the woleswoli registration and representing only adult males who were willing to be registered. The Atlas of the Democratic Republic of Afghanistan shows a population density of 25-50 persons per square kilometer in the central areas of the district and less than two persons per square kilometer in the peripheral areas.

Ministry of Agriculture and Irrigation statistics indicate that there were 168 "villages" in the district of Baraki Barak. Six of these settlement, however, had populations of over 3,000 inhabitants and, thus, may be considered towns. These settlements are Baraki Rajan (28,000), Baraki Barak center (7,500), Pad Khwab-i-Roghani (6,000), Qala-i-Sajawand (3,600), and Qala-i-Zakoom Khel (3,000). The Swedish Committee estimates that there currently are 6,000 families living in 60 villages in Baraki Barak, and that 5,000 of these are farm families. If we use an average figure of seven persons per family, the district has a population of roughly 42,000. Since few areas of Logar have experienced population decimation by refugee outflow, the discrepancy in the pre-war versus current number of villages probably can be explained by the tendency of the Ministry to list all settlements separately. For example, Baraki Rajan itself is unlikely ever to have had a population of 28,000. The Gazeteer, however, lists Baraki Rajan as having a population of 28,000, along with all its satellite villages and their populations. Undoubtedly, the 28,000 also includes the populations of these smaller settlements.

The population estimate of 42,000 tells us very little about the percentage of depopulation that has occurred as a result of the war because of the inadequacy of the baseline figures (69,875 and 39,068) which show a differential of 21,807. Moreover, it is not clear whether the larger figure represents more than the adult male population or if it simply includes adult males who did not participate in the registration process. A survey conducted by Human Concern International (HCI) indicates that Logar province as a whole suffered from the second highest death rate of all provinces in Afghanistan. According to this survey, the United Nations High Commissioner for Refugees (UNHCR) estimates that Logar lost approximately 46 percent of its population to refugee camps in Pakistan. The HCI study maintains that depopulation was even greater than estimated by UNHCR and that only about 56,000 people remain in the whole province.

VITA and other NGO field staff, however, argue that only

about five percent of the pre-war population left Baraki Barak during the war, despite its proximity (ten kms) to the regime-held provincial capital of Pul-i-Alam. They maintain that Baraki Barak currently is the most densely populated district in Logar. Inconsistencies in depopulation estimates may be caused by confusion about the meaning of "depopulation". Lower estimates may reflect the number of persons who became internal (usually to Kabul) refugees or external (Pakistan) refugees, while higher estimates may include refugees as well as those who died or are away fighting. For purposes of evaluating labor availability, thus, it probably would be wise to place depopulation at around 15-20 percent. None the less, it is nearly impossible to assess depopulation without some kind of on-the-ground survey.

Of those persons who left Baraki Barak, the majority went to Pakistan, others to the Kabul area. Security in Baraki Barak has improved considerably in the last six months, while it has declined markedly in Kabul. Field staff note many incidents of return migration from Kabul. Many of those who moved to Kabul, however, allegedly are regime supporters and, thus, cannot be expected to return under the present political conditions.

In terms of ethnic configuration, Baraki Barak district is inhabited by mixed settlements of Pashtuns and Tajiks as well as small numbers of Sadat and Urmus (also called Chandal). Estimates of proportions were fairly consistent, indicating that approximately 50 percent are Tajiks, 40 percent Pashtuns, and the remaining ten percent mixed Sadat and Urmur.

Tajiks living south of the Hindu Kush are not related to the mountain Tajiks to the north. They have no tribal structure but often emulate other aspects of Pashtun behaviors. Sadat (plural of Sayyid) refers to a group of people who claim direct descendance from the Prophet Mohammed through his daughter Fatima. Although it usually is claimed as an ethnic affiliation, Sadat, in fact, are members of other ethnic groups. URMUR?

According to field officers, the majority of Pashtuns belong to the tribal confederations and/or sub-tribes: Durrani, Mohmand, Baber Khel, Stanikzai, and a relatively small number of Waziri and Khoja. Assessing the significance of Pashtun tribal and sub-tribal membership (for example, in terms of who will cooperatewith whom) often is difficult because of the very different levels of affiliation provided. To say that someone is a Durrani, for example, tells us very little because Durrani is one of the two largest Pashtun tribal confederations. Very few members (perhaps none) of this confederation think of themselves as Durranis but, rather, as members of some finer classification (sub-tribe). Thus, any clan-related cooperation should not be expected simply because persons are Durranis. Of the other groups mentioned, Mohmand is a large independent tribe (neither Durrani nor Ghilzai) with members in Pakistan as well as in

Afghanistan. Waziris also are an independent tribe of relatively large size. Many sources consider Stanikzais to be only marginally tribal, that is, possibly not of Pashtun origin but having taken on Pashtun behaviors.

VII. Village War Damage and Current Level of Activity

The location of Baraki Barak just off the Kabul-Gardez highway, as well as the nearby presence (and higher altitude) of the regime-held provincial capital (Pul-i-Alam) have subjected the district to a great deal of bombing over the course of the war. The eastern portion of the district, bordering Altamur (in Pul-i-Alam) and fairly densely populated, has suffered the most damage.

Field staff report that 1983-87 were the worst years for Baraki Barak. According to the Afghanistan Agricultural Survey, 47 out of a sample of 49 farmers from 22 villages claimed that their village had been bombed in 1987, while 48 reported bombing in both 1985 and 1986. Between 16 and 20 percent of tehse farmers stated that their crops had been fired in each of these years, 14 percent claimed their irrigation system was destroyed in 1985, and 12 percent reported irrigation system destruction in 1987. Half the farmers surveyed indicated they had lost livestock to bombing or fighting in 1985. VITA field staff estimate that there is not a field in Baraki Barak that has escaped bombing and that many have been seriously damaged. One field officer reported taking three days with a tractor to level one parcel of land that had been badly damaged.

VITA and Austrian Relief Commitee (ARC) field staff cited the following villages as most seriously damaged (in the order listed): Pad Khwab-i-Roghan, Qala-i-Jabar, Baraki Barak, Qala-i-Yusuf, Baraki Rajan, Shah Mazar, and Chelozai. Pad Khwab-i-Roghan suffered heavy and repeated bombing because it is situated on a hill used by the mujahideen as a base against a nearby government post. In the town of Baraki Barak, about 80 percent of the housing has been damaged. Overall, field officers estimate that about 25-30 percent of houses were totally destroyed and another 10-15 percent damaged. Many of these dwellings have been repaired by villagers but, according to field officers, many remain structurally unsafe.

The majority of the mines have been cleared by the mujahideen except around government posts near Pul-i-Alam town and mujahideen bases near the border with Pul-i-Alam district. There currently is no fighting in the district, although there are rumors of a planned attack to liberate Pul-i-Alam, the only part of the province under Kabul government control.

VIII. Transportation and Communication

The town of Baraki Barak is on the main Kabul-Gardez highway thus providing an easy link with Pul-i-Alam, Kabul city, and the Kabul-Kandahar highway which runs north-south slightly west of the western boundary of Baraki Barak district. The Kabul-Gardez highway is in relatively good condition and, until the regime lost control of it, it was fairly well-maintained. The road between Pul-i-Alam and Qadir Khel, which lies on the Kabul-Kandahar highway, is in bad condition between Pul-i-Alam and Baraki Barak town and is in only slightly better condition between Baraki Barak town and Qadir Khel. Field officers state that it takes 1.5 hours to traverse the road by car from Qadir Khel village to Baraki Barak town, a distance of about 20 kms.

Internal roads are primarily of the kacha type (dirt, gravel). The road between Baraki Barak and Charkh districts is metalled. All the roads have been heavily damaged by bombings, movement of heavy equipment, and artillery. The large potholes left by bombing frequently fill up with water and cause flooding which makes the roads impassable. In addition, many portions of roads were blown up by the mujahideen to keep government soldiers out of the area. No maintainance has been possible for years. Thus, the roads are badly rutted. Most reports indicate that travel time generally is longer than before the war and that the condition of the roads is very hard on vehicles. Several farmers interviewed, however, suggested that the roads had been in bad condition even before the war began and that travel time was only minimally longer. VITA has repaired one kacka road in the district.

There are two routes into Baraki Barak from Pakistan. One, running from Teri Mangal via Jaji to Dobandai in Logar, opened in May when a regime post in Paktya fell to the mujahideen. The other route passes from Wana in South Waziristan through parts of Paktya and Ghazni, and then on to the Kabul-Kandahar highway.

The majority of bridges in Baraki Barak district are wooden structures with cement abutments spanning streams. Most of these bridges reportedly have been destroyed or badly damaged and, thus, vehicles must go through the water. Heaviest damage is in the Chehiltan area. Haphazard repairs by mujahideen have kept three small concrete bridges useable but in need of more permanent repair. The one on the Logar river between Baraki Barak town and Pad-i-Khwab Roghani is in fairly good condition, while one pillar of the bridge over the Logar at the junction of Baraki Barak and Deh Shaikh has been destroyed. There are no large cement bridges in Baraki Barak.

TELEPHONE, TELEX, ETC/

IX. Political Structure

Kabul Government

At present, the Kabul regime holds only the capital city of Pul-i-Alam, and about a five kilometer radius around it.

Resistance

All of the seven tanzeems (Afghan Resistance Parties based in Pakistan) of the Alliance have some influence in Baraki Barak. Jamiat-i-Islami (Rabbani) currently appears to have the most influence, followed by Harakat-e-Enqelab-e Islami (Nabi Mohammedi). The allegiance to Jamiat may reflect the large Tajik population, although these Tajiks do not necessarily align themselves with the northern Tajiks who run Jamiat. That Nabi Mohammedi is from Baraki Barak undoubtedly explains Harakat's strength there. Some respondents feel that Harakat is the strongest party in the area. Hezb-i-Islami (Hekmatyar) appears to rank third. Some commanders from other tanzeems have gone over to Hezb but it is difficult to predict whether or not they will remain loyal once the war is over.

The other four Alliance tanzeems (Jebhe-ye Nedjat-e Melli-ye Afghanistan of Mujaddidi, Mahaz-e Milli-ye Islami of Gailani, Hezb-e-Islami of Khales, Ittehad-e-Islami of Sayaf) are weaker. Hezb-e-Islami (Khales), however, appears recently to have gained influence in the western portion of the district. Expatriate sources who have been in the area recently report an increase in inter-party tension there as a result. In general, however, these tanseems seem not to have very observable separate areas of control. Commanders from different parties draw supporters from the same villages. Various individuals suggested that many families employ a strategy in which brothers join different parties in order to offer the family protection regardless of which party comes to power. There well may be some validity to this explanation because a similar strategy was in use prior to the war, i. e., politically aware families frequently had one son in a religious group, one in a traditional monarchist group, and one in a leftist group.

In addition to a provincial level council to coordinate military activities, there is a sort of loosely organized war council (jehad-e-shura) of important commanders which meets about once a month during the winter when little fighting goes on and occasionally during combat seasons. With the exception of two older religious leaders, most of the members of this council appear to be of the younger, new-style educated leaders from formerly uninfluential families. There are, however, conflicting reports on this issue. VITA's agricultural extentionist, for example, contends that some of these people actually are from influential families.

All of the field officers working in the area state that relations between commanders are relatively smooth. There have been no serious inter-party fueds for at least four years.

NGO Shuras

The majority of the NGOs with projects inside Afghanistan work through some kind of a loca council referred to as a "shura".2 These councils serve primarily to introduce the NGO to the community, assist in establishing priority needs, and identify worthy recipients for assistance. In Logar, there is a provincial level shura which meets mostly to coordinate military activities. It occasionally also settles disputes between tanzeems.

A shura to assist VITA in Logar was established in . It is located in . Tanzeem commander from the jehad-e-shura form the core of the VITA Reconstruction Shura. When one cannot attend, he sends a representative. According to one source, the two main commanders in the area initially were not in favor of the shura because it would reduce their influence. Civilians take part on some occasions.

The Swedish Committee for Afghanistan (SCA), which has projects in the area and works through the same shura, reports that the composition of the shura members is variable. At one meeting, called by an expatriate SCA agriculturalist, commanders, several civilian elders, and the VITA ADO attended.

The VITA ADO had been trying to persuade the leading commanders to nominate a group of farmers to whom some responsbility can be delegated to work with him on a more regular basis. He has been successful in setting up such a two-tiered system in neighboring CHarkh district, but the commanders in Baraki Barak currently are unwilling to allow authority to be given to civilians. Thus, VITA staff have been making some of the allocation decisions themselves based on their knowledge of the community, with the consent of the people.

SCA staff comment that the shura is not very decisive in its decision-making and often resist making decisions regarding allocation of resources. They tend to want to turn these decisions over to field staff. For example, the SCA made available small amounts of seed and fertilizer for roughtly 2,000 farmers. The shura chose the main distribution points and either nominated or ratified local persons to share responsibility with SCA staff for distribution at each center. Negotiations were carried on with each village to select the most needy beneficiaries. The SCA would like to build a tiered system in which the larger district shura would meet a few times a year, but the decisions about recipients would be made at the lower

level shura.

X. Agriculture

Land Ownership

Data from the Agricultural Survey of Afghanistan indicate that the average number of jeribes farmed in Baraki Barak in 1987 was 12.6. Agricultural survey data are a bit skewed, however, because of the very small sample (only 48 farmers listed for the whole district, some of whom live in villages not within the administrative boundaries of Baraki Barak) and a lack of random sampling techniques. VITA staff estimate that an average family in Baraki Barak owns roughly 5 jeribes of land. Land ownership appears to be relatively equal. Even large landowners are not likely to own more than 30-40 jeribes, although there are a few who own more.

With respect to sharecropping, the standard tenancy arragnement is that the tenant receives 1/3 of the crop and provides the oxen. The landlord receives 2/3 of the crop and supplies the other inputs - seed and fertilizer. For those tenants who work on refugee-owned land, the tenant takes 1/2 of the crop but must supply all the inputs, while the owner receives the other half of the crop but provides only the land. Some of the land owned by persons who went to Kabul are being farmed by mujahideen. Some migrants who have returned have resumed farming but many have not because they lack the wherewithal to do so. Refugees in Pakistan who indicate their willingness to return express the fear that they will not be able to obtain agricultural inputs.

Labor Availability

As in almost every part of Afghanistan, agricultural labor is in short supply in Baraki Barak. Population loss due to flight has not been as dramatic as in some other areas (e. g., Kunar). None the less, many males are fighting, some have been severely handicapped or killed in the war. One old man in the district complained to the ARC staff that the younger men show little interest in laying down their arms and resuming life as ordinary farmers. A VITA staff person heard many complaints about the unwillingness of mujahed to farm even when they are not engaged in military operations. The VITA ARS officer, however, felt it was difficult to generalize about mujahedeen. Some women do field work but it is not clear that the percentage of those who are willing and able to do so has increased due to a demand in labor. Women traditionally work in enclosed gardens or orchards and also take care of animals. Some cut and carry fodder and some go out into the fields to do tasks like weeding. In this area of Afghanistan, however, it is not very common for

women to work in the fields.

Farm Power

Oxen are the most common source of farm power in the area because --. During the war, many oxen were killed or sold to pay expenses. In a sample of 48 farmers, the Afghanistan Agricultural Survey found that 51 percent used their own oxen on irrigated wheat-growing land in 1987. Prior to the war, 62 percent had used their own oxen. These figures represent a decline of almost 11 percent of farmers using their own oxen. This decline may reflect a situation similar to the one which occurred in neighboring Chak district (Wardak province). In 1987 the price of oxen suddenly increased substantially. A number of farmers in Chak sold their oxen with the expectation that prices would fall and they could buy oxen back at a cheaper rate. Unfortunately, not only did the price not fall, it continued to climb and the farmers were unable to replenish their oxen stock. One ox, for example, currently costs between Afs. 80,000 and Afs. 100,000. PRICE BEFORE??

The incidence of sharing oxen, although quite common before the war, has increased proportionately with the decline in oxen ownership. VITA staff suggest that many farmers owned only one ox before the war and that many have one now. Curiously, none of the farmers in a sample of 57 oxen-owners reported owning only one oxcen (Agricultural Survey data).

Lending oxen was common before the war as well. But now that the supply has diminished while the demand steadily has increased. Field staff report that some farmers rent oxen at a cost of between Afs. 2,000 and Afs. 3,300 for plowing one jeribe, whereas a commercial tractor last year cost roughly Afs. 225 for one jeribe. The extraordinary difference in price is explained by the cost of feed, the rish involved in owning oxen during war time, and the length of time it takes to plow one jeribe. Tractors are not readily available, however, so hiring oxen may be the only option in some areas. In addition, oxen are more reliable in some kinds of topography.

Oxen replenishment has posed something of a problem for NGOs. VITA supplied 100 oxen last fall to Baraki Barak and Charkh ADSs. Of these 100, three died en route. The remaining 97 were distributed free of charge in the two districts. A recent check indicated that 73 remained with their new owners. Twenty-four either had been sold or had died over the winter. Field staff felt that most had been sold.

Several other problems have occurred in this program. In one incident, VITA oxen being transported to the town of Charkh (capital of Charkh district) were "kidnapped" either by a whole village or by one of the locally influential tanzeems. After

several days, commanders from Baraki Barak and Charkh intervened and negotiated a ransom of ten oxen. In another incident, 12 oxen were stolen by a mujahed in Baraki Barak. VITA staff were able to recover the oxen after reporting the theft to the man's commander. In this case, it appears that a fee was not required. These incidents point out the necessity of having good relations with local commanders.

VITA staff decided to distribute 30 of the 50 oxen designated for Baraki Barak by selecting families that staff members personally knew were especially needy and, then, getting approval from the shura. The selection criteria are: (1) the family owned at least 4-5 jeribes of land, (2) the family could not afford an ox, and (3) an adult male family member had been killed in the war causing family income to be reduced. Efforts also were made to give one ox to two families living near one another so that they could set up a sharing arrangement. Having distributed the 30 oxen, the staff ran out of needy families and turned to the shura for selection of the remainder of the recipients. Staff report that the shura would have preferred to name all the beneficiaries, but staff felt the shura would not be fair. There have been complaints that VITA staff make too many of the decisions. One of the theoretical advantages of having a shura is that field staff should be able to rely on it to make delicate decisions, e. g., allocation of resources in great demand.

There are, however, two sides to this argument. On the one hand, some contend that community anger is generated more quickly aginst an outside who makes what is regarded by locals as an unfair decision. Several Baraki Barak farmers volunteered that problems in oxen distribution were created by VITA staff, rather than shura members, making allocation decisions. On the other hand, in many areas, shura members themselves try to shift the burden of decision making on to NGO staff. They argue that no decision will be regarded as fair by everyone in the area and that outsiders suffer less from resentments simply because they are not in the area all of the time.

Field officers report that there are eight private for-hire tractors in Baraki Barak. They are located in the following places:

Baraki Barak town
Baraki Rajan
Pad Khwab-i-Roghan
Chelozai
Qala-i-Abbas
Shah Mazar
Mohmand (Qala-i-Kohna-i Mohmand?)

The rate for use of these tractors last fall was Afs. 800 per

hour, but probably is higher now because of the diesal shortage. Two NGOs have supplied tractors to the area - VITA (2) and SCA (1). These tractors are rented at a subsidized rate of Afs. 400 per hour, a price set by the jehad-e-shura. The war council initially wanted to offer tractor service free of charge but field officers pointed out that there would be too much competition for their use and arguments would ensue. The subsidized rate seems to have been low enough to permit farmers with 3-7 jeribes to afford to hire the tractors for plowing. The shura divided the district into areas and decided on the length of time the tractor would spend in each area. VITA staff then solicited applications from farmers and made up a list partly on a first come - first served basis and partly according to their evaluation of need. An attempt was made to limit the users to those who had lost oxen and were small or average landholders. VITA staff also tried to share the tractors among several villages in a limited area in order to make use more cost effective. The tractors worked in a 3-10 square km area that included the following villages, all located in the eastern portion of the district:

Baraki Rajan	Pahndeh
Chehiltan	Pad Khwab-i-Roghan
Taqab	Nobujah
Loya Kalau	Baraki Barak
Pul-i-Jaji	Kolay Juma Shah
Deh Sheikh	Zakoom Khel
Kolay Morkhora	Shaikhan
Mohmand	Shah Mazar

These villages were selected both because connecting roads could handle tractor travel and farmers in them had lost many oxen. This approach, however, resulted in considerable pressure on staff. In one village, for example, about 50 farmers applied to rent the tractor, but the schedule allowed for only a few farmers in each village, resulting in many complaints to the shura.
RESULT

Three small threshers also were introduced into Baraki Barak by VITA. The threshers proved not to be very useful WHY WHY WHY ____________________. The engine from one thresher has been used to power a grain mill.

Crops

Logar province has never been considered one of the major grain producing areas of Afghanistan. According to most sources, the province was producing less than 5,000 tons of grains annually in the at the time of the Soviet invasion. Its most important commercial crops were tobacco (primarily in the northern parts of the province), potatoes (whole province), and

grapes (primarily in the districts of Charkh, Mohammed Agha, and Pul-i-Alam).

Major crops in Baraki Barak were wheat (mostly irrigated), corn, potatoes, apples, apricots, and tobacco. Roughly 6,600 hectares of irrigated land existed before the war. The largest portion of this land was planted in wheat. Some rainfed wheat (lalmi) was grown in relatively small amounts near Baraki Barak town, Baraki Rajan, and Shah Mazar. Irrigated wheat is planted between late September and mid-November and harvested between July and September. Lalmi wheat is planted in late March-early April and harvested between mid-July and mid-September.

Corn is the second most important crop in Baraki Barak. The Agricultural Survey found that nearly 60 percent of the farmers who participated in the Survey and who grew wheat also grew corn. A generation ago, few Afghan people ate corn. Over time they have acquired a taste for it because it adds some variety to an otherwise dull diet. The average farmer who grows only grains might plant four jeribes in wheat and one in corn. Corn is planted in May-June and harvested between late August and late September.

Vegetables are grown mainly for private consumption, although surpluses are sold in the local area. The center of commercial vegetable growing is around the town of Baraki Barak. Some farmers raise potatoes on a commercial basis. Potatoes currently are marketed in Pakistan where the prices are higher than in Afghanistan. Some tobacco is raised in the district, most of which is sold in Pakistan.

Fodder crops, including alfalfa and clover, are grown. Local horticulture focuses on apples and apricots. Horticulture is extremely important in Afghanistan because it represents the source of more than 25 percent of all foreign exchange earnings. The northwest part of the district, bordering on Wardak province, is the main fruit growing area. Little intercropping occurs in orchards because of lack of water and shade. Melons are grown when the rain and snow fall have been exceedingly good.

Under normal conditions, little land in Baraki Barak is left fallow. The Agricultural Survey found only 8 out of 47 farmers who intentionally left land lie fallow. VITA staff estimate that approximately 20 percent of farmland in Baraki Barak has been abandoned due to lack of water and poor security conditions. This estimate is consistent with data recorded in the Atlas of the Democratic Republic of Afghanistan. Most of the abandoned land is located in the eastern portion of the district, near Altamur in neighboring Pul-i-Alam. VITA tractors plowed some damaged and abandoned land last year.

Bee keeping and honey production for commercial use are

common in this area. Logar, in fact, is one of the most important areas of honey production in Afghanistan.

Irrigation

Irrigated land in Logar province as a whole was less than 0.6 irrigated jeribes per agricultural population in the late 1960s. CHECK POLISH ATLAS FOR MORE RECENT Logar is considered a "fresh water seasonably scare" area and lack of water for irrigation is a serious problem. In 1988, Agricultural Survey enumerators spoke with 138 farmers who had left Baraki Barak. They reported a shortage of irrigation water as the most serious problem in the district. The shortage of available water is due to below average precipitation over at least the last ten years, as well as less melt water from glaciers that are retreating, causing a drop in the water table.

All of Logar is situated in the Indus river basin. The main river, the Logar, is a tributary of the Kabul river, itself a tributary of the Indus. Peak flows in area rivers occur from March to May; lows occur by August. In Baraki Barak itself, there are two other rivers - the Shiniz Rud and the Wardak/Baraki Barak Rud. The Shiniz runs ------------------??????
It is a perennial river but, during the very dry season in October-November, it has minimal water. In spring, the river usually floods, washing away walls and diversions. The Wardak Rud runs from Chak (Wardak province). It is referred to as the Baraki Barak Rud after entering Baraki Barak district. The confluence of the Shiniz Rud and Wardak/Baraki Barak Rud is at the village of Shadikhan. There are approximately 24 intakes for irrigation on both rivers. Many of the irrigation ditches have filled partially with mud, considerably reducing their carrying capacity.

Canals represented the main pre-war source of irrigation in Baraki Barak. CONDITIONS

There also are many karezes in the district. All have been badly neglected and some have been damaged by bombs. For most of these karezes, a shareholder would get water for crops once every 20 days. As of June 1989, VITA had completed 28 karezez and two juis. Forty-four karez and two intake projects were under construction.

Agricultural Inputs

Data from the late 1970s indicate that fertilizer and agro-chemical use was minimal in Baraki Barak. Some fertilizer use (between 10-50 kgs. per hectare) occurred in a belt across the far north and east of the province.

Between 1980 and 1988 fertilizer and agro-chemicals were

available locally on a very limited basis. Improved seed, fertilizer, and agro-chemicals currently are not available at all, unless brought in by an NGO. VITA staff suggest that shopkeepers do not import these items from Pakistan because local people cannot afford to pay a price that would cover costs and even a small profit. When the Kabul government controlled the roads, more affluent farmers were able to purchase inputs in Kabul. Urea, when it was available in late winter, cost Afs. 1200 per 50 kg. bag. Phosphate, which is far more scarce, cost Afs. 950 per 35 kg. bag. The shortage of herbicides is a major problem because wheat and fruit crops suffer from serious fungus problems.

XI. Markets

The major market in the area, at regime-held Pul-i-Alam, no longer is accessible to people from Baraki Barak. Mujahideen have prohibited trade with this market. Essential supplies are flown in by helicopter from Kabul.

There are two functioning bazaars in Baraki Barak district– one at the town of Baraki Barak and one in Baraki Rajan. Shops in the Baraki Barak and Baraki Rajan markets total approximately 80 and 100 respectively. Many commodities are scarce or nonexistent. Rice, sugar, cooking oil, petrol, diesal, kerosene and soap, for example, are quite scarce. There are no petrol stations or fuel depots. Shopkeepers and mujahed bring fuel from Pakistan now but, prior to last fall, they were able to buy it in Kabul. Kerosene, when it can be found, currently costs about Afs. 1000 per gallon. Petrol runs about Afs. 1,500 per five litres, while diesal costs roughly Afs. 1,000 per gallon.

Although quite a lot of vegetables are grown in Baraki Barak, some (potatoes, onions) now come from Wardak. Many other foodstuffs must be brought from Pakistan, e. g., cereals, oil, meat, citrus fruits, and rice. Three to four months ago, 7 kgs. of wheat cost Afs. 1,900; 1 kg. of apples cost Afs. 100; and 1 seer of potatoes cost Afs. 150.

The price of wheat has followed the expected curve for the province over the last couple of years, i. e., high in the months of November through Marsh and low in the summer months. The cost of wheat was appreciably higher last winter than it was the previous winter - Afs. 380 in February of 1989 compared to Afs. 320 in February 1988. This price differential may reflect the difficulty of bringing anything from Kabul this year. Summer 1989 prices, however, were lower than those of the previous summer, perhaps suggesting a better harvest.

The prices of mutton and beef are high, i. e., Afs. 59 per kilo above the national average for mutton and Afs. 36 above the

average for beef. In February 1989, only Kabul and Ningrahar had higher prices for a kilo of mutton and Kabul and Parwan had higher prices for beef.

Local wood is available for cooking. One seer costs Afs. 120. Some people also use animal dung and/or kerosene.

XII. Storage Facilities

There is a government go-down for grain storage in the town of Baraki Barak. It has a capacity of 1,200 tons but has been empty for some time because the little grain harvested but not used can be stored in family compounds.

XIII. Mills

There are two private diesal mills in Baraki Barak - one is on Chelozai and one in Baraki Rajan. One farmer stated that there are 30 diesal mills in the district but they are inactive because the cost of diesal is prohibitive. An Agricultural Survey enumerator estimated that there are 10 diesal mills in Baraki Barak, three of which were provided by VITA. CHECK WITH LYNN ON ALL THIS . . . One additional portable mill was established by VITA, using an engine from one of the small pilot threshers that did not work well. The mill itself was purchased in Kabul. The ARS officer decided to put this mill in Baraki Barak town. He also decided that the mill should charge half the cost of the commercial mills, or one "paw' per seer of wheat as opposed to the usual two "paw". There are also many water-powered mills operating in winter when the rivers are full. Prior to the war, farmers relied entirely on water-powered mills.

XIV. Other NGO Activities

The Swedish Committee for Afghanistan

SCA field staff first carried out a survey of 6,000 families in 60 villages in Baraki Barak in order to evaluate farm problem areas. SCA works through the shura used by VITA. Initially, SCA intended to supply agricultural inputs to the whole district. They quickly discovered that they did not have sufficient resources to distribute equitably. They now concentrate on the eastern portion of Baraki Barak, from the district capital to Yusuf Khel village.

The project has established three nurseries, planted primarily with apple trees. They also plant a few other

varieties of fruit and some winter-hardy vegetables. Nursery land is rented and field staff tend the plants. Their irrigated wheat is planted between late September and mid-November and harvested between July and September. Lalmi wheat is planted in late March-early April and harvested between mid-July and mid-September.

The SCA sent in 70 tons of improved wheat seed and 150 tons of fertilizer last fall. The seed was sent from Pakistan, but the fertilizer was purchased locally (originally from Kabul). The SCA requested the shura to identify the neediest 2,000 families for distribution of seed packages and fertilizer. The amount received by each family would be sufficient to plant one jeribe in improved seed.

1The figures included in these profiles were provided by the Ministry of Agriculture and Irrigation in the mid-1970s and from the Atlas of the Democratic Republic of Afghanistan, as well as a variety of other written and oral sources. There are, however, no reliable population statistics for Afghanistan. And, in fact, one finds wide discrepancies in population figures depending upon the source. The primary reasons for the kinds of discrepancies we are concerned with are that many landowners did not respond to the Civil Registration System (tazkira) and that most registrations involved only male adults and, sometimes, older male children. It is necessary, then, to multiply some population figures by an estimated average number of persons per family minus [perhaps] one (the adult male). This is a very inaccurate way to arrive at a population statistic at any time but especially so when there is considerable debate over the average number of persons in a family and one is unsure about how many persons in the family were registered. Thus, population figures cited herein are valuable only in a relative sense and, perhaps, as a rather artificial baseline against which depopulation can be "measured".

2note on shura paper

